

Testimony Regarding the Elimination of the Neighborhood Youth Center Grant  
Submitted by Don Maleto Boys and Girls Clubs in Connecticut Alliance

Senator Harp, Representative Walker and committee members thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Boys and Girls Clubs in Connecticut Alliance to discuss the proposed elimination of the Neighborhood Youth Center Grant. My name is Don Maleto and I am the Director of the Alliance. The elimination of this grant will result in staff cuts, program elimination and reduction of children served at our clubs. The economic impact of this cut will be most severe for our inner city clubs.

The Alliance consists of sixteen organizations serving in twenty -two towns and cities. Boys and Girls Clubs provide a safe haven that has programs that supplement the school day by providing afterschool educational and recreational opportunities.

Clubs in Connecticut receive funding through the Neighborhood Youth Center Grant and use that funding to implement four programs: Power Hour, Smart Moves, Keystone Club and Torch Club designed to improve academic success, develop healthy lifestyles and build good character and citizenship in our members. These programs and others like them enable our clubs to extend and reinforce what is being taught in school.

The results for our Neighborhood Youth Center funded programs in 2012 are remarkable.

- 4,666 members collectively completed 732,445 hours of their homework at one of our safe haven clubs and also engaged in educational enrichment activities.
- 3,243 members where trained in Smart Moves prevention programs with only 1 member arrested/suspended or expelled from school.
- 1,059 members enrolled in our Keystone and Torch Club leadership programs for teen members. They performed 19,749 hours of Community Service.

The allocation of funding equates to an investment of .54 cents per hour of homework help and educational enrichment time; \$92 per every member trained to resist alcohol and drugs; \$7.84 per hour of community service performed by our Keystone and Torch Club members.

The investment the State of Connecticut has made in our Boys and Girls Clubs is working. The results and stewardship of funding is of the utmost importance to our club professionals. Please continue with this investment and our clubs will provide the greatest return imaginable. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Don Maleto